

NEVADA'S UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS: *Turnaround Strategy and Process*



GUIDANCE
April 2015

The following section provides the Nevada Department of Education's Theory of Action and our strategy overview for turning around underperforming schools. In 2015, a statewide stakeholder group made up of school district leaders and organizations, such as the Nevada State Education Association and Nevada Parent Teacher Association, was assembled to provide input on NDE's theory and strategies. Revisions were made and the following documents have been the result.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the NDE will be engaging school and district partners in phasing in the implementation of these turnaround strategies. This guidance document will review the initial requirements that will need to be implemented in order to put all of Nevada's underperforming schools on the path to dramatic improvement.

Theory of Action

Underperforming Schools



If the NDE provides underperforming schools with a structured diagnostic and planning process focused on three priority areas:

- School leadership,
- Tier 1 instruction aligned to standards,
- Teacher professional learning communities that analyze and use data to strengthen instruction; and

Districts provide schools with the conditions required for successful school turnaround, including freedom from certain all district programs and requirements and the freedom and resources to identify and build programs and capacity to address their specific needs; and

The NDE identifies external organizations that can provide schools with support in diagnostic and planning and the three priority areas; and

The NDE establishes a Leadership Network to support school leaders; and

The NDE, school and district leaderships utilize all available resources to provide schools with that support; and

The NDE works with schools, district and support organizations to monitor implementation and identify and solve problems; and

The NDE, Districts, and Schools build shared social trust among parents, students, teachers, administrators and staff;

Then all underperforming schools will exit their low-performing status within three years.

Nevada Turnaround Strategy for Underperforming Schools: Overview

To achieve our goal of dramatic improvement, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) is proposing a new strategy to turnaround all underperforming schools. The new strategy calls for the transformation of underperforming schools rather than the marginal improvements that resulted from prior efforts. The NDE intends to change the trajectory of schools in underperforming status by supporting work that is focused and aligned with the following framework and beliefs about turning around underperforming schools:

Framework:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Strong School Leadership} + \text{Turnaround Conditions} + \text{Aligned Tier 1 Instruction} \\ + \\ \text{Trust} \\ = \\ \text{Transformational gains in student achievement} \end{array}$$

Beliefs:

1. **School Leadership:** Leadership is the most important element of school turnaround; without a quality leader, a school will not improve. Districts have an equally important role in leading and supporting school turnaround and are critical to successful and sustainable turnaround efforts.
2. **Student Learning:** Improved student learning requires consistent Tier 1 instruction aligned to standards. The most effective way to improve Tier 1 instruction is to build the skills of teachers through effective teacher-led professional learning communities (PLCs) focused on data-analysis to inform instruction.
3. **Conditions:** Districts need to provide schools with the conditions required for successful school turnaround including principal selection of school staff, increased learning time, supportive school climate, and autonomy to implement the School Turnaround Plan.
4. **Planning:** Schools need time, structure, and support to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses and develop powerful, coherent School Turnaround Plans.
5. **Talent:** Schools need to be staffed with teachers, administrators, and other staff who both want to work in the school and have the skills, beliefs, and commitment necessary to advance the School Turnaround Plan.
6. **Funding:** Schools need to be able to use all available funds to support their turnaround strategies.
7. **Trust:** Schools need to build shared social trust among parents, students, and teachers.
8. **Governance and Performance Management:** Governance of and responsibility for underperforming schools needs to be shared by the district and the local school leader. Implementation of the School Turnaround Plan is the joint responsibility of the school leader and the district superintendent/leadership. NDE will monitor implementation.

NDE's Theory of Action for Underperforming Schools

In order to advance its theory of action, NDE will focus its and districts' underperforming school resources and attention on four areas:

1. Robust diagnostic reviews
2. Creation of strong School Turnaround Plans

3. Support for the key improvement areas within schools, including:
 - Placement and development of strong leaders in every underperforming school
 - Teacher-led processes to continually improve Tier 1 instruction aligned to standards
 - Effective PLCs with a focus on data analysis to inform instruction
4. Monitoring progress of school turnaround through adherence to plan implementation with a focus on its impact on student achievement and student outcomes

The above areas will be supported through NDE's work with districts to establish the conditions necessary for school turnaround.

Diagnostic Review and School Turnaround Plans (STP)

NDE will identify diagnostic and planning tools and processes as well as external partners who are positioned to provide diagnostic and planning support for use in underperforming schools. The Diagnostic/Planning process should produce a meaningful and actionable document that drives the school's work and resource allocation.

The diagnostic review and planning efforts will focus on school leadership, the turnaround conditions, current level of social trust, the alignment of instruction to standards, and processes for teachers to work together to improve Tier I instruction and encourage the sense of urgency required for turnaround.

The school diagnostic and planning process will produce the school's STP. School plans will be available online and accessible by school, district, and NDE staff, and the public. They will include budgets for all funds, (i.e., School-wide Title I plan requirements) but need not include all the plans required of other schools.

Districts, either through use of an external partner or with district school improvement staff support, will be responsible for ensuring engagement of teachers and families in the diagnostic and planning processes. District leadership will also participate in planning and may have responsibility for leading implementation of some elements of the plan. All teachers in an underperforming school shall also have opportunities to participate in the planning process.

Elements of the school diagnostic process

A diagnostic team will schedule the following activities:

- Review of student performance data
- Observations and assessment of classroom instruction
- Observation of collaborative teacher planning of instruction, i.e., PLCs
- Assessment of principal and teacher leadership
- Analysis of school budget and use of discretionary funds including all Title dollars
- Interviews with district leadership regarding turnaround conditions, finance and budget, and school governance
- Assessment of the level of social trust based on a survey of teachers, parents, administrators and students (in upper grades)

- Focus groups with teachers, parents, community members, and (in high schools) students

The team will produce a brief report that includes findings, recommendations, and areas for further internal discussion all aligned with the NDE turnaround strategy and the School Turnaround Plan template.

Elements of the School Turnaround Plan for Underperforming Schools

Based on the diagnostic report, the school will develop a School Turnaround Plan with support from the external diagnostic/planning partner or district staff that addresses the following:

- School leadership: Plan for ensuring that the school has an effective principal and processes to support teacher leaders; continuing support for the principal's leadership development aligned with the NDE principal leadership program.
- Turnaround conditions: Specific plans (including required changes to district policies and collective bargaining agreements necessary to establish turnaround conditions) in the following areas:
 - Principal selection of all teachers
 - Supportive school climate
 - Autonomy to implement the School Turnaround Plan
 - Additional learning time, for applicable schools
- Teacher-led professional learning communities (PLCs): Time and support for grade- or subject-based PLCs that focus on data analysis to support effective Tier I instruction aligned with standards.
- School budget: School budget that utilizes all available funding to support the turnaround strategies.
- Annual performance targets for student outcomes and leading indicators of progress aligned with exiting Priority, Focus and 1-Star status within three years.

NDE will issue a request for proposals process to pre-qualify External Partner organizations with the capacity and expertise to support implementation of the NDE turnaround strategy.

When schools develop their School Turnaround Plans, they will identify the NDE-approved External Partner, if one is utilized, that the school intends to use and describe the specific services to be provided. The budget will include funding to support the work of the External Partner.

Following submission of plans, NDE will review School Turnaround Plans and provide any additional detail that must be addressed. Determinations relative to any requested funding from NDE will also be addressed at this point.

School Leadership

Participation in a school leadership program either provided by the external partner, the district, or by the NDE will be a requirement for underperforming school principals. At a minimum, a leadership program must include individual coaching and mentorship throughout each school year with regular district leadership involvement. Coaches/Mentors must meet with the principal a minimum of one time per month and

district leadership must meet with the principal a minimum of one time per month. Meetings will focus on implementation of the developed 90-day Leadership Plan.

Turnaround Conditions

NDE will require that every School Turnaround Plan describe how the district and school leaders will work together to create the following turnaround conditions by the start of the first year of plan implementation. Plans that fail to include strategies and procedures to create these conditions on that schedule will not be approved and/or funded by NDE. These conditions include:

- Principal selection of all teachers
- Supportive school climate
- Autonomy to implement the School Turnaround Plan
- Additional learning time, for applicable schools

Recognizing that establishing the turnaround conditions will require time and resources, school plans need to describe a realistic process for establishing each condition.

Teacher-led Processes to Continually Improve Tier 1 Instruction

Every school must have a detailed plan for engaging teachers in the process of continually improving Tier 1 instruction through the use of grade or subject level professional learning communities. Plans must provide for the time, training, and support needed to build robust professional learning communities for teachers in the school, using underperforming school grant resources such as School Improvement, Priority or Focus Grant funds and/or district set-aside funds to support underperforming schools.

Progress Monitoring

A consistent protocol for progress monitoring of School Turnaround Plan implementation will be established in all schools. The protocol will include the following:

- Regularly scheduled problem-solving meetings with school and district personnel responsible for School Turnaround Plan implementation. These meetings will be led by either the External Partner or designated district school improvement staff.
- Follow-up calls between NDE and either External Partner or designated district school improvement staff after each problem-solving meeting.

The External Partner or designated district school improvement staff will lead 90-day status update meetings with school, district, and NDE, focusing on achievement of quarterly milestones for plan implementation and student outcomes and leading indicator performance targets. District staff will participate in the monthly and 90-day monitoring meetings with a clearly defined role and accountability for specific elements of the plan. In addition to the meetings, NDE may conduct unannounced school visits as needed.

Both the regularly scheduled problem-solving meetings and the 90-day monitoring meetings will be organized around a specific set of questions, with a decision tree off every question. For example:

- Are you doing what you said you would do?
- If yes, what's the impact? What's the evidence? Is it the impact you expected?

- If it's not having the expected impact, what do you need to do differently?
 - Is it time to pivot or persevere? If pivot, to what? Why?
 - If persevere, what will you do differently to make it work now?
- If you are not doing what you said you would do, why not?
 - What are the obstacles to acting on your plan? Can the obstacles be removed? What kind of help do you need?
 - If the obstacles cannot be removed, what are NDE's next steps?

The External Partner or designated district school improvement staff and NDE will have clearly defined system for escalating problems identified during problem-solving and monitoring meetings.

Information in this document is design to provide initial guidance to school districts and their underperforming schools for the 2015-16 school year. Additional guidance may be provided as the 2015-16 school year progresses.

The following information can be found in this section:

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The ESEA Flexibility Waiver & Underperforming Schools

Nevada's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver Flexibility Request (the Waiver) is Nevada's plan for educational improvement. Approval of the Waiver grants federal permission for the State to be exempt from certain restrictive requirements of the 2002 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (as known as No Child Left Behind), which has not been reauthorized. Since the first approvals of states' waivers in 2011, more than 40 states have been granted waivers, permitting them to design and implement new and rigorous standards and assessments, state-specific accountability systems, and educator evaluation frameworks.

As part of the accountability system, states are required to identify Priority and Focus Schools as well as have a system for identifying other struggling schools (e.g., One Star Schools). This is done through the accountability system known as the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF). Every three years, Nevada will be identifying its Underperforming Schools (Priority, Focus and One Star Schools) as required by the Waiver. Therefore, most schools identified on the current Underperforming Schools list will be required to implement their turnaround plans for a minimum of three years (2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18). Schools that were previously identified (signified by an asterisk* on the Underperforming List found on the NDE website: http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/Nevada_Underperforming_Schools/) as a Focus or Priority School but have not yet met exit criteria will have the opportunity to meet exit criteria annually. This would allow a continuing Priority or Focus School to qualify for removal from the Underperforming list prior to the end of the 2017-18 school year.

School Designations

Schools are designated based on the criteria within Nevada's approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver. Below briefly describes the distinction between each school designation. The detailed description of the designation criteria can be found on our website in 2 areas:

1. ESEA Flexibility Waiver: http://www.doe.nv.gov/Resources/NV_ESEA_Waiver/
2. Underperforming Schools Fact Sheet: http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/Nevada_Underperforming_Schools/

A **Priority School** is among the lowest 5% of Title I-served schools based on performance. Priority Schools have room for substantial improvement in whole school proficiency and growth. Intensive district and community assistance will provide this school with support necessary for improvement.

A **Focus School** is among the lowest 10% of Title I-served schools based on their achievement gaps. Focus Schools have room for substantial improvement in the area of student achievement with specific sub-group populations, such as, students with disabilities, English Learners, and/or low-income students.

A **One-Star School** is a school that earned fewer than 32 index points from all the measures in the Nevada School Performance Framework. This means that the school

has room for substantial improvement in multiple areas. The required engagement of district leadership will support the school in improvement planning and implementation of specified and effective practices.

Underperforming School Requirements

Each designation of underperforming schools (Priority, Focus, 1 Star) comes with specific requirements that must be met. This is primarily due to the requirements and conditions set forth by the United States Department of Education (USED) through the ESEA Flexibility Waiver. Further, through the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Renewal process currently underway, USED has included additional requirements that states must now address for its continuing Focus and Priority Schools that did not meet established exit criteria. Nevada has addressed those additional requirements, among other items, through its Waiver Renewal application and is awaiting notification of approval status from USED. Until then, the NDE will move forward by using Nevada's Theory of Action and Strategy for Underperforming Schools to guide underperforming schools through the next steps in meeting requirements and moving towards effective implementation of improvement strategies.

General Requirements for All Underperforming Schools

All Underperforming Schools must notify parents and stakeholders of the school's underperforming designation and status at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year. Notification may be done through letters, email, website, newsletters, or other forms of communication with parents and stakeholders. Notifications should also invite parents to be a part of the improvement planning process.

All Underperforming Schools must receive from their district ongoing support throughout data and root cause analyses, targeted improvement planning and selection of supports and interventions. Districts must continue to provide support throughout implementation of each school's turnaround plan.

All Underperforming Schools are required to complete and submit a School Turnaround Plan utilizing the School Performance Plan (SPP) Template.

- AdvancED accreditation plans will not be accepted for any underperforming school.
- The School Performance Plan template can be found on our website: http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/District_and_School_Performance_Planning_Resources/

All Underperforming Schools must follow the established school improvement planning process as outlined in SAGE.

- A Planning/User Guide can be found on our website: http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/District_and_School_Performance_Planning_Resources/

All Underperforming Schools must conduct a Comprehensive Needs Assessment that includes data from the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools (NCCAT-S) or a similar diagnostic as performed by an external provider.

- If a school has completed a full NCCAT-S audit within the last 3 school years (2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15), data from that analysis may be used. Please note, a full diagnostic (NCCAT-S or other similar tool/process) must be completed once every 3 years.
- If a school has not conducted a full NCCAT-S or similar diagnostic within the last 3 years, then a school must complete this process as part of their Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
- NCCAT-S Materials can be found on our website:
http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/NCCAT-S_Resources/

All Underperforming Schools must address the following requirements outlined in Nevada's Theory of Action and Strategies for Underperforming Schools:

- These key areas are addressed through a combination of the School Performance Plan components and/or through the online tool eNOTE:
 - School Leadership;
 - Tier 1 Instruction Aligned to Standards; and
 - Teacher professional learning communities that analyze and use data to strengthen instruction.

All Underperforming Schools and their LEAs must participate in regular monitoring activities. These activities may include but are not limited to participating in quarterly conference calls, eNOTE online monitoring, on-site monitoring with NDE staff, and monthly meetings between school principals and district leadership to check progress on school leadership 90-day plans.

All Underperforming Schools must submit their 2015-16 Turnaround Plan to NDE through the eNOTE on-line monitoring system by July 1, 2015. In addition to submission of the plan, schools will have requirements that will need to be addressed within the eNOTE system (<https://enote.doe.nv.gov/>) and/or through their plan. Below describes the unique requirements for each type of designated underperforming school.

Priority School Requirements

All Priority Schools are required to complete a Priority School Turnaround Plan utilizing the School Performance Plan template. In addition to the completed plan, Priority Schools must address the following requirements online in the eNOTE system:

- 1. School Leadership*** – Review performance of principal and either replace or demonstrate current principal has the competencies.
- 2. Effective Teachers*** – Retain only those teachers determined to be successful based on competencies.
- 3. Financial Incentives, Flexible Working Conditions, Retaining and Placing Effective Staff** – Financial and Other incentives offered to instructional staff to recruit and retain them: examples include, scheduling options or opportunities for promotion

and growth. LEAs are required to ensure most effective teachers and administration are in Priority Schools

- 4. Instructional Programs based on Student Needs, Identified through Data Analysis and Aligned with Standards*** – LEA is required to identify a new or revised instructional program for reading, math, science and writing, demonstrating how it is different from previous years. In addition, LEAs must implement 1 or more of the following in order to build capacity to effectively use student data to drive instruction and student interventions: employ a full time data specialist, implement PD for teachers, and/or implement PD for Principals.
- 5. Increased Learning Time** – Extend the learning day for student instruction and the school's master schedule is redesigned to allow for common planning time for teachers.
- 6. Non-Academic Factors Affecting Student Achievement: Community-Oriented Services** – LEAs are required to demonstrate ongoing community review of school's performance. In addition, the school is required to implement 1 or more of the following strategies to provide social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students: PD for family/community engagement staff and/or for entire school staff, conduct an audit of the current level of family/community engagement at the school and address the findings from the audit, and/or provide PD for staff on students with disabilities (SWD), English Language Learners (ELL), and low-income students and the inclusion of their families.
- 7. Non-Academic Factors Affecting Student Achievement: School Environment** – the school must implement 1 or more of the following to ensure a climate that is supportive of student academic and social growth: PBIS, Anti-bullying, Hire specialist in climate and culture, Audit from Center for School Safety and implement recommendations, PD for staff on climate/ culture, and/or PD to build capacity of leadership.
- 8. Fiscal Resources Support** – Budgets for Priority Schools must reflect all available funds for use towards effective implementation of the school plan. For example, funds may include SIG, 1003a, 5-15% set-aside of Title I, Title IIA, Title III, and IDEA.

In order to ensure the above requirements are addressed, Priority Schools will respond to questions that cover the 8 identified items listed above within eNOTE. The listed items above also align with the NDE Theory of Action and Strategy for Underperforming Schools, effectively focusing on the priority areas required of all underperforming schools (Items with an **asterisk*** indicate clear alignment with NDE's Theory of Action/Strategies).

Focus School Requirements

All Focus Schools are required to complete a Focus School Turnaround Plan utilizing the School Performance Plan template. Included in the SPP template is an "Interventions" page, which is activated after selecting "Focus School" on the front page of the template. All Focus Schools must complete this page by selecting **one intervention** to implement that will best address the reasons for achievement gaps with the identified sub-groups (students with disabilities (SWD), English Language Learners (ELL), and low-income students).

The following provides the list of Focus Interventions, which also align with the NDE's Theory of Action and Strategy for Underperforming Schools:

1. **Providing strong leadership** – Mentoring, coaching and/or professional development for administration to increase the principal's skills and competencies as an instructional and turnaround leader.
2. **Ensuring teachers are effective** – Mentoring, coaching and/or professional development for all teachers to improve instructional effectiveness.
3. **Strengthening the school's instructional program** – Providing support and professional development to improve Tier 1 instruction aligned to state standards.
4. **Using data to inform instruction** –Teacher collaboration through professional learning communities that analyze and use data to strengthen instruction. Additionally, it may include training and supporting teachers to analyze and use data to inform instruction and meet the needs of students.

It is recognized that schools regularly implement all of the strategies/interventions listed above; however, in this case, the Intervention page of the SPP will need to focus on that one key intervention that, according to your school's comprehensive needs assessment, is critical in impacting the achievement and growth of the identified sub-groups.

One-Star School Requirements

All One-Star Schools are required to complete a One-Star School Turnaround Plan utilizing the School Performance Plan template. Included in the SPP template is an "Interventions" page, which is activated after selecting "One Star" on the front page of the template. All One-Star Schools must complete this page by selecting one intervention to implement that will best address the reasons why the school is underperforming.

The following provides the list of One-Star Interventions, which also align with the NDE's Theory of Action and Strategy for Underperforming Schools:

1. **Providing strong leadership** – Mentoring, coaching and/or professional development for administration to increase the principal's skills and competencies as an instructional and turnaround leader.
2. **Ensuring teachers are effective** – Mentoring, coaching and/or professional development for all teachers to improve instructional effectiveness.
3. **Strengthening the school's instructional program** – Providing support and professional development to improve Tier 1 instruction aligned to state standards.
4. **Using data to inform instruction** –Teacher collaboration through professional learning communities that analyze and use data to strengthen instruction. Additionally, it may include training and supporting teachers to analyze and use data to inform instruction and meet the needs of students.

It is recognized that schools regularly implement all of the strategies/interventions listed above; however, in this case, the Intervention page of the SPP will need to focus on that

one key intervention that, according to your school's comprehensive needs assessment, is critical in impacting the achievement and growth of the students at your school. For the remainder of the interventions listed above, they will be included in the eNOTE system for One-Star Schools to respond to.

SIG (1003g) Requirements

The NDE submitted the application for School Improvement Grant (SIG – 1003g) funds to USED on April 15, 2015. SIG requirements from USED have changed and Nevada's application was revised to reflect and address those changes as well as to incorporate NDE's new SIG Turnaround Strategy. Since there was a delay in the application process from USED, SIG funds will likely not be available until late summer/early fall. The following provides basic SIG highlights:

- Districts with Priority and Focus Schools are eligible to apply for funding. However, all Priority Schools within an LEA have first priority for SIG funding over Focus Schools.
- Funding requests must be between \$50,000-\$2,000,000 per year per eligible school.
- SIG will now cover a 5-year implementation period (rather than 3 years in the previous competitions). The first year is a planning year. Years 2-4 are implementation years. Year 5 is implementation of a sustainability plan.
- Annually, a SIG School must meet specified outcomes to be funded for the next year.
- SIG Principles remain the same. A separate state turnaround model was not proposed.
- External Providers will need to be utilized in assisting schools and districts in the diagnostic, planning, and progress monitoring of the SIG plan.
- Family Engagement has increased requirements.

Funding

Title I, Part A: School Allocations

Title I Schools receive within district allocations, known as per pupil allocations (PPA). These funds are intended to support all activities necessary to support student achievement. Title I Underperforming Schools must ensure those funds, which are allocated annually to the school, are used to support effective implementation of the school's turnaround plan.

District Set-Aside: School Performance Support

Per Nevada's ESEA Flexibility Waiver, school districts with Focus and/or Priority schools, or a high proportion of 1 and 2 Star schools, are required to set-aside an amount equal to between 5%-15% of the district's Title I-A allocation to meet the needs of their underperforming schools. Note that the phrase "an amount equal to" clarifies that the funds set-aside for this purpose need not be all Title I funds. Other funding sources that can be used to meet part of this total required set-aside include Title II, Part A, Title III, and IDEA funds.

Districts must think strategically about how these funds are utilized to support the dramatic improvements that are necessary at their underperforming schools. Districts will need to develop a comprehensive approach to supporting their schools and provide that information to the NDE in two forums: **ePAGE** and **eNOTE**.

- Within **ePAGE**, districts must identify the amount of funds that will be reserved. For example for Title I-A, this is done on the set-aside page under “School Performance Support” and within the Supplemental Schedule.
- As part of Title I-A desktop monitoring in **eNOTE**, districts will need to submit a spreadsheet that identifies all of the funds reserved for school performance support, no matter the funding source (e.g., Title I-A, Title II-A, Title III, IDEA, etc.), and outlines the district’s approach for supporting its underperforming schools.

Guidance relative to the requirements of the 5%-15% set aside can be found on our website:

http://www.doe.nv.gov/SchoolImprovement/Underperforming_Schools_Support_Resources/

School Improvement 1003(a)

Section 1003(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended, requires that State Education Agencies (SEAs) allocate funds to local education agencies (LEAs) to support Title I schools identified as underperforming. In accordance with its approved ESEA Flexibility Waiver, Nevada has identified its Title I Priority, Focus and One-Star Schools as those underperforming schools that are eligible for 1003(a) school improvement funds.

Applications for 1003a Title I School Improvement funds will be released to LEAs from the NDE on May 4, 2015. With limited funding available (amount of funds are to be determined, depending on Title I, Part A final allocations from USED), it is likely that not all identified Priority, Focus and One-Star Schools that apply will receive 1003(a) funds. Ideally, LEAs will work with their underperforming schools to determine the critical amount of funding that is necessary to implement effective Turnaround Plans designed to rapidly improve student achievement and outcomes. Applications must demonstrate a clear need for the requested funding in order to ensure effective implementation of a school’s promising Turnaround Plan.

The following list provides some details associated with the 1003(a) funds application:

- Schools may request up to \$150,000 per school.
- One-Star Title I Schools can only be funded after it has been determined that all Priority and Focus Schools have sufficient funds to implement their plans.
- SIG funded schools are not eligible for 1003(a) funds.
- The intention of the NDE is to fund plans that are aligned to our Theory of Action and our identified funding priorities.
- Applications are due to the NDE on July 1, 2015.
- Applicants will be notified of approval and award status on or before August 1, 2015.

- Allocations for all approved application budgets will be entered into ePAGE. Subsequent budget amendments, request for funds and final financial reports will be managed within ePAGE.
- Grant Awards will span the 2015-16 school year, ending June 30, 2016.

SIG (1003g)

SIG funds are competitive and, as stated above, they will become available to successfully applying districts ideally by September 2015. Nevada will have \$4,857,582.00 for the 2015-16 school year with SIG activities to be carried out over a span of 5 years. Districts and schools must be committed to dramatic, sweeping changes in order to achieve the necessary results for school turnaround.

Timeline: Turnaround for the 2015-2016 School Year

The following timeline outlines the estimated/proposed dates for conducting various Turnaround activities:

| <i>PROPOSED TIMELINE for UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS</i> | |
|---|--|
| DATE | ACTIVITY |
| April 2015 | Initial Guidance for Underperforming Schools released |
| May 4, 2015 | Funding Application (1003a) released by NDE |
| July 1, 2015 | School Plans & addressed requirements in eNOTE due to NDE for Approval |
| July 1, 2015 | Applications for Improvement Funding (1003a) due to NDE |
| July 2015 | School Plans, Requirements and Funding Applications reviewed by NDE |
| August 2015 | Schools and Districts notified of School Plan, Requirements and Funding Application status |
| August 21, 2015 | School Plans & Requirements revisions due to NDE for final approval |
| September 1, 2015 | Implement Plans, including requirements and interventions |
| <i>PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING</i> | |
| DATE | ACTIVITY |
| Monthly beginning Sept. 2015-June 2016 | Monthly coaching/mentoring meetings for school leadership (principal) with district leadership and/or external partner. |
| Quarterly (every 90 days) – approximately Aug, Nov, Feb, May | School Problem Solving & Progress Monitoring Meetings with district leadership and/or external partner, with NDE follow-up calls, as appropriate (the initial August meeting will focus on plan establishment, approval & implementation for the beginning of the school year) |
| December 2015/January 2016 | Mid-Year Desktop Monitoring through on-line tool: eNOTE Tracker |
| May/June 2016 | End-of-Year Desktop Monitoring through on-line tool: eNOTE Tracker |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| January/Feb. 2016 | On-site Monitoring conducted by NDE cross-functional monitoring teams |
| May/June 2016 | NDE Meetings with Schools & Districts: Review of the Current Year's & Preparation for Next Year's Implementation |

| NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTACTS | | |
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